CLAIMS

5   1.   A method performed by a computer of performing multi-player game play over the Internet comprising:
    receiving a selection of a game for play, the selection being performed by a user;
    querying a presence server for available opponents in response to receipt of the selection of a game for play, the available opponents being from a predefined list prepared by the user;
    presenting the available opponents to the user;
    receiving a selected opponent, the selected opponent being selected by the user;
    transmitting a message to the selected opponent requesting play of the selected game; and
    beginning play of the selected game with the selected opponent.

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20   2.   A method of selecting an opponent for multimachine multiplayer computer game play comprising:
    providing a list of available games;
    receiving a game selection of a one of the available games;
    determining a list of available game opponents, the list of available game opponents being determined by interrogating a software module in communication with a presence server, the presence server maintaining information regarding users logged onto a network and the software module maintaining, based on information provided by the presence server, information regarding specified ones of the users;
    receiving an opponent selection of a one of the specified ones of the users; and
    transmitting a request to play a game to the one of the specified ones of the users.

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3.   A method for playing a game between at least two devices comprising:

5   providing a game playing software;

configuring the game playing software to work with an instant messenger software;

connecting a user to at least one other player; and

communicating game information to at least one other player.

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4.   The method according to claim 3 wherein connecting a user to at least one other player comprises:

polling at least one instant messenger to determine other possible players;

15   communicating a list of other possible players to a user by the game playing software;

receiving by the game playing software of a player selection by the user;

sending a solicitation to the player selected asking them to
20   join the game; and

receiving by the game playing software of a response from the player solicited.

5.   The method according to claim 3 further comprising an
25   advertising display bar whereby advertisements are displayed.

6.   The method according to claim 5 wherein the advertising process comprises a hotlink button that when pressed enables communication with an advertiser.

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7.   The method according to claim 5 further comprising:
communicating with an advertisement server;

reporting advertisements displayed to the advertisement server; and

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receiving by the game playing software of advertisements from the server.

8.   The method according to claim 5 wherein at least one advertisement is obtained contemporaneously with the game playing software.

9.   The method according to claim 3 wherein the solicitation to the player selected asking them to join the game further comprises:

detecting whether the player selected has the game playing software; and

making the game playing software available to the player selected.

10.   The method according to claim 3 wherein game information is communicated through at least one of the Internet, an Intranet, a parallel connection, and a serial connection.

11.   The method according to claim 3 wherein game information is communicated through the Internet.

12.   The method according to claim 3 wherein the game playing software is provided through at least one of the Internet, an Intranet, a parallel connection, and a serial connection, e-mail, and portable storage media.

13.   A system for playing a game between at least two devices comprising:

a first user device;

a second user device;

a game server;

an advertising server; and

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a presence server;

the first user device, second user device, game server,
advertising server and presence server being linked by a remote
communication link with the first user device and second user
device having messaging software in communication with the
presence server and game playing software in communication with
the messaging software and the game playing software on the other
user device.

14.   The system of claim 13 wherein the game playing software
monitors the sending and receiving of game information; and

wherein the game playing software tracks interruptions to the
communication between the first user device and the second user
device and generates an error message for a communication problem.

15.   The system of claim 14 wherein the first user device
further comprises individual games.

16.   The system of claim 13 wherein the game playing software
polls the messenging software to determine possible game
opponents.

17.   The system of claim 13 wherein the game playing software
creates a selectable list of possible game opponents.

18.   The system of claim 13 wherein the game playing software
receives a selection from a user of a possible game opponent, and
using information from the messenging software contacts the
possible game opponent.

19.   The system of claim 18 wherein the game playing software
determines whether the possible opponent has the game playing
software on the possible opponent's device;

the game playing software sends possible opponents without the game playing software instructions on how to obtain the game

5   playing software; and

the game playing software sends possible opponents with the software instructions on how to join the game.

20.   The system of claim 14 wherein the game playing software

10   displays advertisements during game play.

21.   The system of claim 13 wherein the first user device further comprises an Internet navigator that is usable by the game playing software.

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22.   The system of claim 13 wherein the remote communication link is at least one of the first user device, the second user device, the game server, the advertising server and the presence server all communicate with each other through at least one of the

20   Internet, an Intranet, a parallel connection, and a serial connection.

23.   The system of claim 13 wherein the remote communication link is the Internet.

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24.   The system of claim 14 wherein the game playing software tracks the advertisements displayed during a game;

sends the tracking information to the advertisement server;

receives advertisements from the advertisement server; and

30   stores advertisement information to a memory or storage media.

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